

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 6-8, 15, 16, 24-27, 34, 35, 38, and 39 are pending, Claims 1-5, 9-14, 17-23, 28-33, 36, 37, and 40-42 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Title was objected to; Claims 13, 17, 32, and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; Claims 13, 14, 17, 18, 32, 33, 36, and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101; Claims 8-10 and 26-29 were objected to as containing informalities; Claims 1-5, 9-14, 19-23, and 28-31 were rejected on various prior art grounds; and Claims 6-8, 15-16, 24-27, 34-35, and 38-39 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

In reply the Title has been amended as requested.

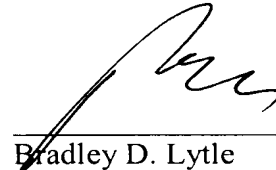
Applicants thank the Examiner for identifying allowable subject matter. In the interest of prosecution efficiency, each of the rejected claims has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and Applicants reserve the right to file one or more continuing applications to cover the subject matter canceled in the present patent application.

With regard to the objection to Claims 8-10 and 26-29, Applicants call to the Office's attention that a Preliminary Amendment was filed with the patent application that corrected the informalities noted in the Office Action.

Consequently, in view of the indication of allowable subject matter, and cancellation of the rejected claims, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, L.L.P.



Bradley D. Lytle
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 40,073

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413-2220
(OSMMN 06/04)